

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6268

UNCLAS TOKYO 10922

FOR COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, JA

SUBJECT: NEW JAPANESE DEPARTMENT LAW

REF: A) STATE 165568; B) TOKYO A-13, JANUARY 9, 1973

1) A DRAFT OF A NEW JAPANESE DEPARTMENT STORE LAW HAS ALREADY PASSED THE LOWER HOUSE OF THE DIET, AND IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE UPPER HOUSE. UPON QUESTIONING, MR. KAWASHIMA, COMMERCIAL POLICY DIVISION, MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE & INDUSTRY, ESTIMATED THAT THIS GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED BILL HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF FINAL PASSAGE AND ENACTMENT INTO LAW IN SEPTEMBER, 1973.

2) AS ALREADY REPORTED BY THE EMBASSY IN REF. (B), THE NEW LAW WILL SIMPLIFY AND LIBERALIZE GOJ CONCURRENCE PROCEDURES FOR OPENING OF NEW STORES AND EXPANSION OF SELLING SPACE IN EXISTING LOCATIONS, ETC. RETAIL OUTLETS COVERED BY THE NEW LAW WILL NO LONGER BE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR PERMISSION TO THE GOJ; INSTEAD, THOSE COVERED UNDER THE LAW NEED ONLY INFORM THE GOJ OF THE PLANNED CHANGES. GOJ CONCURRENCE WILL BE AUTOMATIC EXCEPT IN "PROBLEM AREAS", WHERE MITI GUIDANCE WILL BE GIVEN.

3) THE NEW LAW IS MOTIVATED BY A GOJ DESIRE TO
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STREAMLINE THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, HELP CONTROL PRICE

INCREASES, AND CATER TO CONSUMER INTERESTS WHILE STILL GRANTING A MEASURE OF PROTECTION TO SMALL- AND MEDIUM-RETAILERS.

4) NEWER DEPARTMENT STORES AND THOSE WITH GROWTH PLANS STAND TO BENEFIT MOST BY THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW DRAFT LAW. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL U.S. ENTRANTS ALSO APPEAR TO STAND TO BENEFIT UNDER THE NEW DRAFT LAW.

5) AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION OF THE DRAFT LAW IS BEING COMPLETED, AND WILL BE SUBMITTED UNDER COVER OF A SEPARATE AIRGRAM.

INGERSOLL

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